

17 January 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Indochina Intelligence Resource
Allocation and Planning Study

1. In March 1971, at Mr. Bronson Tweedy's suggestion, you endorsed my convening an interagency group to survey the resources that the intelligence community would have to allocate to matters related to Indochina over the next two to five years. NSA, State (INR), DIA, our FE Division, and the NSC staff all designated representatives and we set to work.

2. As we debated, it became increasingly self-evident that the essential first step in our endeavor was that of determining a valid set of requirements in the shape of Indochina-related tasks the community's components would be expected to discharge during the period in question. Without a definitive enumeration of tasks and responsibilities, any recommendations relating to resource allocation would be sterile and not necessarily related to the real world within which the community's several components would have to live and work.

3. The discussions which comprised our initial phase of effort were summarized in the attached draft memorandum, a final, agreed version of which we were going to recommend that you, as Chairman of USIB, forward to Dr. Kissinger, as Chairman of the Senior Review Group. The more we debated, however, the less likely it seemed that agreement could be reached (or, particularly, DIA's concurrence obtained) on a requirements and tasking statement framed by intelligence community representatives themselves.

4. At this point, and with Wayne Smith's agreement, I took another tack -- that of asking the NSC staff representative, Robert Sansom, to draft the requirements statement, setting the terms of reference for our joint resource allocation planning and attendant recommendations. It seemed to me -- and after some private conversation, Wayne Smith agreed -- that it was really incumbent on the NSC to tell the intelligence community what Indochina-related capabilities the latter would be expected to maintain and what types of information it would be expected to provide over the time frame in question.

Eric Thompson

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5. My thought was that once the community was given its marching orders, as it were, we could then recommend the mix of resources that would be required to discharge them -- i.e., their price tag in terms of manpower, money, and hardware such as airplanes. If, as I privately felt would probably be the case, the price proved a larger one than the policy levels of government wanted to pay, then there would have to be a policy-level decision on which element of this requirements-resources equation was to be considered the constant and which the variable.

6. Unfortunately, in this sphere (as in others) the White House staff was not too effective in doing its share of the work. Sansom's promised draft never materialized and, as you know, he eventually went on to the Environmental Protection Agency. Wayne Smith -- who, in all fairness, had many demands on his time -- never got anyone else to do the required work, nor did he get it done himself before he too left the NSC staff.

7. Shortly before Christmas, after Phil Odeen had had a little chance to get his feet on the ground in his new incarnation, I went to see him and reviewed the above bidding in private discourse, leaving with him a copy of the attached draft memorandum as a concrete illustration of the problem. He called me back on 8 January and we agreed to get together again on Thursday, 13 January.

8. At our 13 January session, Mr. Odeen was most cooperative. He saw the problem clearly and agreed that it urgently needed attention. Drawdown decisions on troop and U.S. asset levels in Indochina were being made and implemented without systematic or careful consideration of their intelligence resource and capability implications. Thus, there was a real and increasing risk that policy levels of the U.S. Government might, at some not too distant point in the future, suddenly find themselves unable to secure the information they required or to execute actions they wanted taken all as a direct but unconsidered result of their own overall U.S. commitment decisions.

9. Mr. Odeen also saw the problem we were considering as fitting, somehow, within the framework of the new intelligence community reorganization -- but he was not quite sure how. He thought the requirements portion of the exercise, at least, might properly fall within the purview of the NSC staff group to be headed by Mr. Andrew Marshall. Odeen himself, however, immediately noted that this would not work because of the time element. Marshall would not be anything like up to speed for another month or two and the task before us could not wait that long. I did not argue the Marshall angle, but did insist that resource and allocation planning was something the intelligence community could best do itself and something that should not be essayed in the first instance by persons or groups outside the community. Mr. Odeen agreed with this. He said he wanted to mull the problem for a short while and then lay it before Dr. Kissinger, but

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promised he would touch base with me again before taking any further action.

10. Late on the afternoon of Friday, 14 January, Mr. Odeen called me back to note that a new diminution of urgency had been added by the President's latest troop withdrawal announcement, which (unbeknownst to either of us) was being made as we were talking on the 13th. Given the increasing urgency, Mr. Odeen wanted to have this whole matter taken up with you and Dr. Kissinger either before or after the VSSG/SRG meeting set for 1500 on Monday, 17 January.

11. After Odeen's 14 January call, I went over the bidding with Mr. Tweedy and we both agreed we should endeavor to caucus with you as early as possible on 17 January, so you did not get caught off guard. This memorandum was drafted to give you the background information pertinent to that discussion.



George A. Carver Jr.

Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

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Attachment:

Memo, dtd 7 May 71,

Subj: Draft Request for
Requirements Endorsement

cc: Mr. Tweedy

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